

Message Text

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SUBJ: CU/IVP/V VOLUNTARY VISITORS (MICHELI, FILIPPO ; AND
BERNASSOLA ANGELO)

1. TWO CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT OFFICIALS, DEPUTY FILIPPO MICHELI
AND CHIEF OF THE DC FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECTION ANGELO BERNASSOLA,
PLAN VISIT US, OCTOBER 23-NOVEMBER 2 IN ORDER TO OBSERVE
LAST PHASE OF ELECTORAL CAMPAIGN. WHILE THEY WILL TRAVEL
AT OWN EXPENSE, THEY HAVE REQUESTED DEPARTMENT'S ASSISTANCE IN
ARRANGING APPROPRIATE PROGRAM AND PROVIDING INTERPRETER SERVICE.
IF DESIRABLE, EMBASSY WILLING RECOMMEND SMALL, PARTIAL SUPPORT
GRANT TO COVER THESE OR OTHER COSTS.

2. MICHELI IS LONG-TIME DC DEPUTY (TERNI) WHO IS CURRENTLY
PARTY ADMINISTRATIVE SECRETARY. ACTIVE IN RESISTENCE, MICHELI
WAS FIRST ELECTED DEPUTY IN 1948 AND SERVED FOR MANY YEARS
AS AN UNDERSECRETARY FOR COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY.

3. BERNASSOLA IS WELL-KNOWN TO EMBASSY AND MANY IN DEPARTMENT,
HAVING WORKED IN DC FOREIGN AFFAIRS SECTION FOR MANY YEARS.
HE IS ALSO DEPUTY SECRETARY OF THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT WORLD
UNION. BERNASSOLA WAS UNSUCCESSFUL DC SENATORIAL CANDIDATE
IN RECENT ELECTION (FOR SEAT FROM SARDEGNA). AS FIRST ON LIST
OF NON-ELECTED, HE STANDS TO ENTER THE CURRENT LEGISLATURE IN
THE EVENT OF THE DEATH OR RESIGNATION OF ONE OF THE PRESENT DC
INCUMBENTS. BERNASSOLA HAS VISITED THE US SEVERAL TIMES,
INCLUDING PRE-ELECTORAL VISITS IN 1974 AND 1968. ON BOTH THESE
OCCASIONS, BERNASSOLA RECEIVED EXTREMELY HELPFUL FACILITATIVE
ASSISTANCE (PARTIAL GRANT IN 1964) FROM DEPARTMENT.

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4. NOT KNOWING WHERE MOST INTERESTING ELECTION EVENTS (SPEECHES, RALLIES) WILL BE HELD BY BOTH PARTIES IN WEEK PRECEDING ELECTION DAY, MICHELI AND BERNASSOLA WOULD APPRECIATE PROGRAM AND ITINERARY SUGGESTIONS. MEETING WITH FOREIGN AFFAIRS ADVISORY STAFF OF BOTH REPUBLICAN AND DEMOCRAT PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES WOULD BE PARTICULARLY USEFUL. THE DC VISITORS WOULD ALSO LIKE TO VISIT WASHINGTON AND CALL ON APPROPRIATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS CONCERNED WITH ITALIAN AFFAIRS.

5. WE ARE VERY MUCH AWARE OF EXTRAORDINARY DEMANDS ON PROGRAMMING AND ESCORT-INTERPRETER RESOURCES DURING PRE-ELECTION DAY WEEK. WHILE WE WOULD HAVE PREFERRED THE SELECTION OF A GROUP WITH A YOUNGER ORIENTATION, WE NEVERTHELESS URGE THAT EVERY EFFORT BE MADE TO ACCOMMODATE THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT PARTY'S REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE IN ARRANGING A WORTH WHILE VISIT. ITALY AS REGARDS THIS US ELECTION AS HOLDING UNIQUE SIGNIFICANCE FOR FUTURE COURSE OF US-EUROPEAN RELATIONS AND, IN PARTICULAR, FOR POSSIBLE REPERCUSSIONS ON SENSITIVE, INTERNAL ITALIAN POLITICAL ALIGNMENTS. IT IS THEREFORE ALL THE MORE IMPORTANT THAT THE DC HAVE AS BROAD AN EXPOSURE TO AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE FORCES AT WORK FOR CONTINUITY IN US FOREIGN POLICY DURING THE POST-ELECTORAL PERIOD. APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S EARLIEST POSSIBLE RESPONSE. VOLPE

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